

THE HEPATITIS C CRISIS:

THE FACTS



General Facts

- An estimated 4 million Americans have been infected with the hepatitis C virus.
- 2 out of 3 people are unaware that they have the virus.
- Hepatitis C can show no symptoms until advanced liver damage develops.
- There is no vaccine to protect against hepatitis C infection.
- Early diagnosis is essential to controlling the spread of hepatitis C.
- Hepatitis C is a treatable disease if identified before significant complications develop.
- Regardless of what treatment choice a person makes, it is recommended that:
 - Individuals with HCV should avoid all use of alcohol and recreational drugs.
 - Individuals with HCV should be vaccinated against hepatitis A and hepatitis B.
- Chronic liver disease is among the top ten killers of Americans 25 years of age and older.
- Hepatitis C is the most common cause of chronic liver disease in the U.S. accounting for 40-60% of all cases.
- Hepatitis C is the most common indication for adult liver transplantation in the United States.
- Complications associated with HCV-related cirrhosis are projected to increase dramatically in the next decade - liver failure by 106%, liver cancer by 81%, and liver-related deaths by 180%.
- HCV-related end-stage liver disease is a leading cause of death among people coinfecting with HIV.
- The social and fiscal costs of HCV are skyrocketing. The projected costs of the current HCV epidemic, if left unchecked, will be over \$85 billion for the next decade.
- Inadequate funding has seriously impaired HCV prevention and control efforts. Coordinated national, state, and local programs with consistent, sustained funding are essential to mount an effective response to the hepatitis C epidemic.
- Adequately funded research is a critical component of HCV prevention and control.

C THE PROBLEM: BE A PART OF THE SOLUTION!

Caring Ambassadors Program

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